PLUS

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AN ENTICING ZERO-PROOF MOCKTAIL P. 58

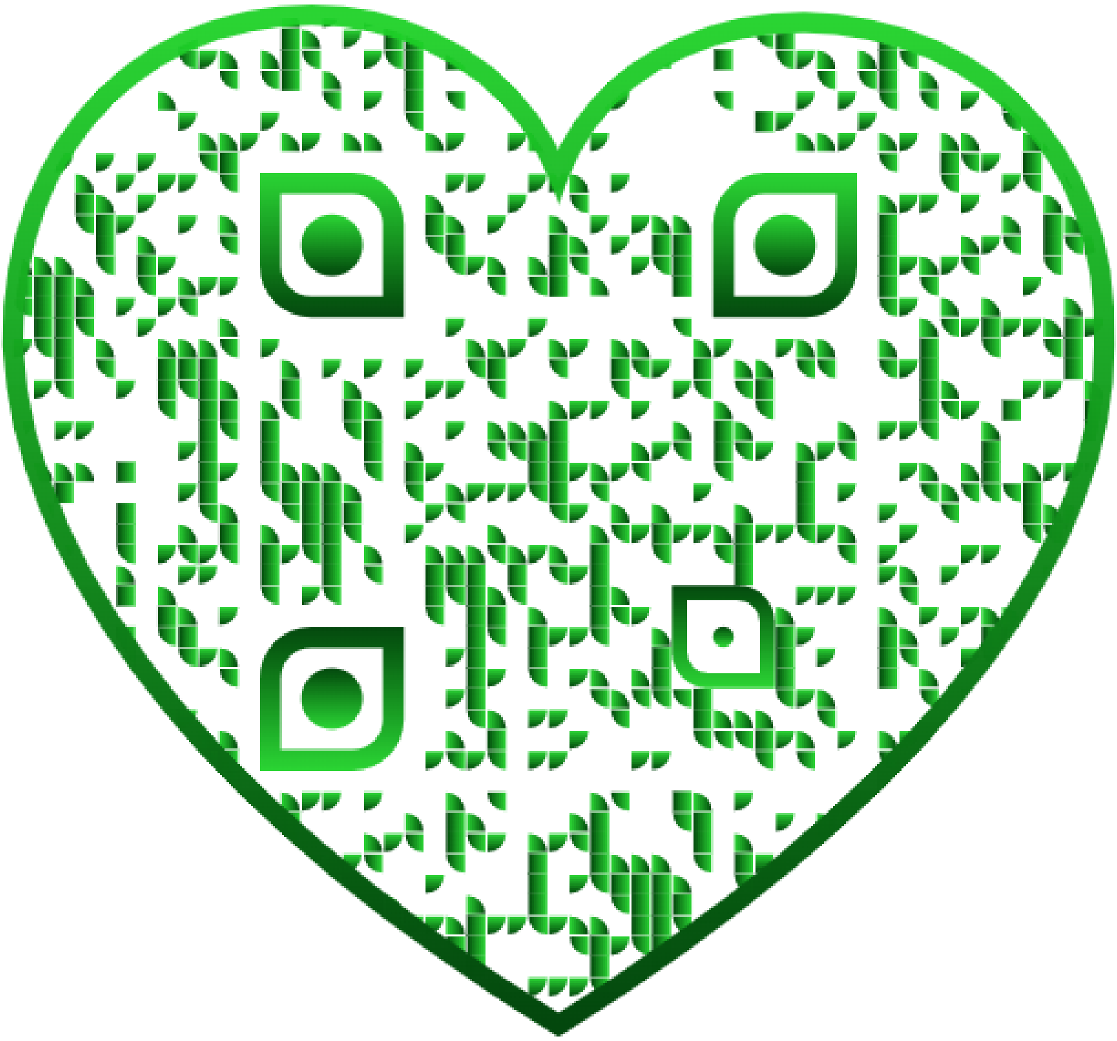
307 TOP DOCTORS IN 47 SPECIALTIES P. 45

Acadiana PROFILE

LIGHT RECIPES

THE HEALTH ISSUE

Stuffed pork loin that's both succulent and light



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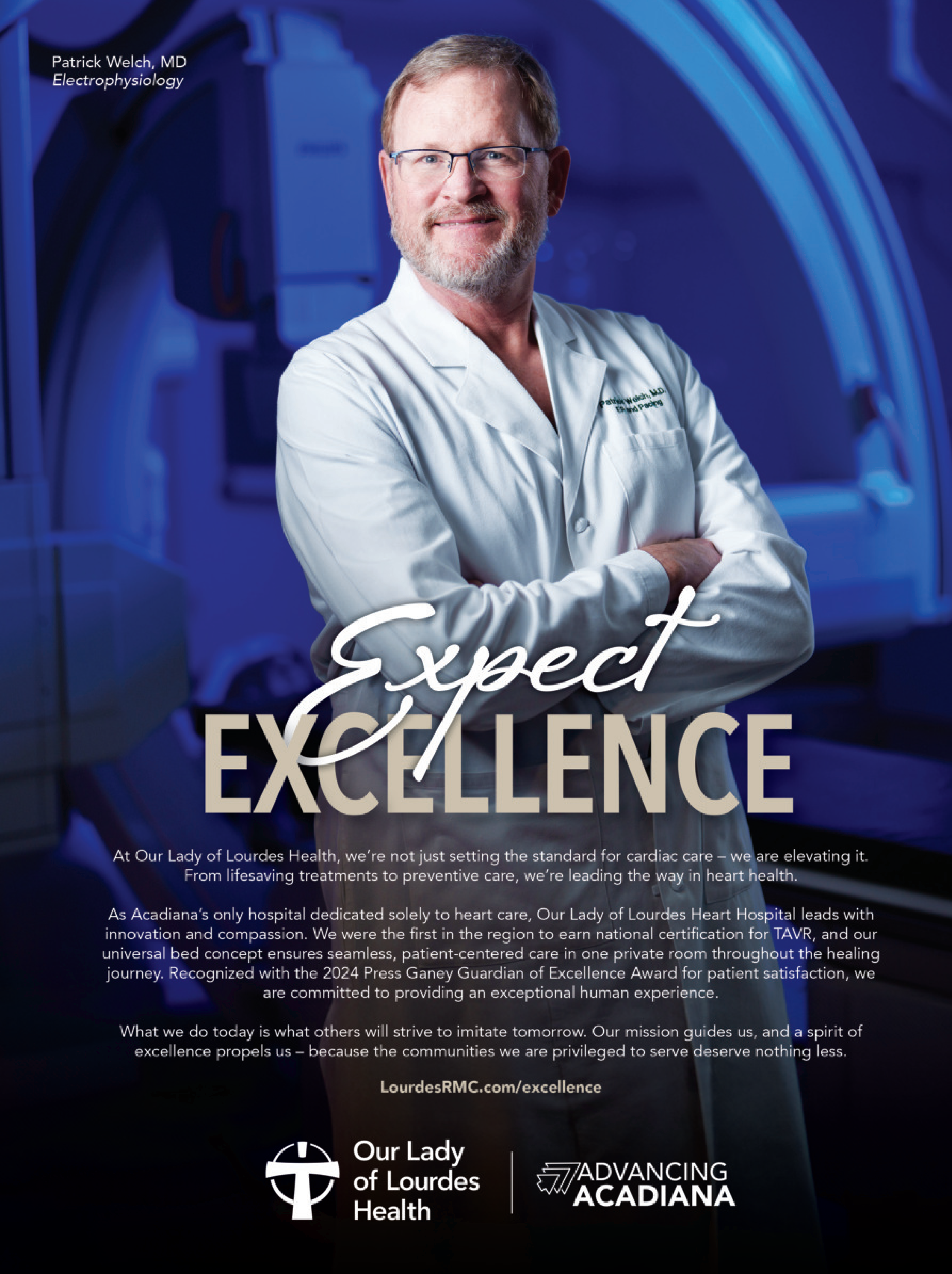

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KEEPING IT LIGHT

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Acadiana Profile (ISSN 0001-4397) is published bimonthly by Renaissance Publishing LLC, 110 Veterans Memorial Blvd., Suite 123, Metairie, LA 70005 (504) 828-1380 and 128 Demanade, Suite 104, Lafayette, LA 70503 (337) 235-7919. Subscription rate: One year $24, no foreign subscriptions. Periodicals postage paid at Lafayette, LA, and additional mailing entry offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Acadiana Profile, 110 Veterans Memorial Blvd., Suite 123, Metairie, LA 70005. Copyright © 2025 Renaissance Publishing LLC, all rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced without the consent of the publisher. The trademark Acadiana Profile is registered. Acadiana Profile is not responsible for unsolicited manuscripts, photos, and artwork, even if accompanied by a self-addressed stamped envelope. The opinions expressed in Acadiana Profile are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the magazine or owner. Official digital reprint and framed content is only available from Renaissance Publishing, LLC by calling (504) 828-1380.

Welcome to New Iberia LOUISIANA

EXPERIENCE

the Books Along the Teche Literary Festival in New Iberia, LA and enjoy the sights, sounds and tastes of this unique Cajun destination, captured in literature by James Lee Burke through the eyes of his fictional character, Detective Dave Robicheaux. Meet Southern storytellers, enjoy Cajun food and music, and discover New Iberia's fascinating blend of heritage, hospitality and history.

Mary Kay Andrews is a *New York Times* Best-Selling Author with over 30 novels. Her latest novel, *Summers at the Saint*, is a mix of mystery and romance which showcases Mary Kay Andrews ability to use warmth and humor to create a fun beach read. This year's festival will also have many new exciting activities and some favorites will return like our beloved Jazz It Up Opening Reception, Mystery Bus Tour, Fais DoDo with Cajun Dance lessons, and our VIP Bookclub with our Great Southern Writer, Mary Kay Andrews to name a few. Visit BooksAlongtheTecheLiteraryFestival.com for ticket information and more details.

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APRIL 4-6, 2025

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Finding your Balance at Mardi Gras

IN THIS ISSUE, we've got healthy recipes and it's also Mardi Gras time and, in the past, those two things have not necessarily gone together for me: healthy and Mardi Gras. No, Mardi Gras was always prime time for junk food and excess. When we went to a parade, we'd bring an ice chest full of mainly processed food to keep us fueled for hours and hours of festivities. There would be mini muffalettas, giant bags of Cheetos and Oreos along with way more snacks than the law should allow. That was part of all the fun.

Fast forward to today and Mardi Gras isn't so much fat Tuesday anymore — more like a lean Tuesday for me. I don't know if age has caught up with me or I'm just being more careful about what I eat, but healthy foods and Mardi Gras are an easy mix for me now. I'm just as happy nibbling on fruit while watching a parade and not feeling sluggish after, the way I used to. If I go to a friend's house for a Carnival party, I find myself reaching for healthy choices because generally they are also delicious choices. It's not like I'm suffering and relegated to only gnawing on a plain carrot stick. Now there's likely a bowl of delicious hummus next to those carrot sticks and that works for me.

The same goes for drinking. In my college days, the ice chest that was filled with the junk of my youth became filled with booze. We drank our calories at parades for many years. But today, I'm about two years alcohol-free and enjoy lots of zero-proof options at parades and my body thanks me later.

I'm not saying I won't have a piece of king cake or a handful of Cheetos this Carnival season. But I've discovered a balance and thanks to all of the delicious "healthy" food and tasty zero-proof drinks that abound, it's not a sacrifice at all.

The healthy recipes highlighted in this issue also don't require a sacrifice of flavor or enjoyment. With a few small tweaks, a traditional dish can become more healthful. Baking instead of frying, adding more vegetables to replace bread crumbs or skipping the side of pasta can make a big difference.

This Mardi Gras, here's hoping that you enjoy yourself and find whatever balance works best for you to pass a good time.

Reine

What I'm Loving

A FEW OF THE BEST THINGS I ATE, WATCHED AND READ LAST MONTH

WHAT TO DO

Gearing up for the Tennessee Williams Festival, which is in New Orleans at the end of March. If you're a reader or a writer, it's so much fun.

WHAT TO WATCH

"Slow Horses." I loved the flawed, dysfunctional characters who managed to succeed despite themselves.

WHAT TO READ

Tana French's "The Hunter." I'm new to French's books but have pretty quickly read through all of them now. Real page-turners!

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APRIL/MAY 2025

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Top Lawyers

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LAFAYETTE

Jumbo Gumbo Gathering

Hungry for gumbo? Head to the 2nd annual Roux Fest Gumbo Cookoff powered by Lagcoe (February 27). The inaugural 2024 event packed Blackham Coliseum with fans sampling gumbos by 50 teams producing over 170 entries for awards. Designed to emphasize Acadiana's deep-rooted partnership with the energy industry, Roux Fest is expanding this year with more than 70 Gulf Coast energy companies cooking up their best gumbos in an effort to win the ultimate Gumbo King title. Proceeds go to local charitable organizations.

HOUMA

Of Parades, Biscuits and Brews

Houma celebrates a safe, family-friendly Carnival season with more than a dozen parades starting with the Krewe of Hercules (February 21) and ending with the Krewe of Kajuns (March 4). Revelers get fueled up at Houma's newest downtown breakfast hotspot, The Buttery Crumb (605 Barrow Street). Try the iced brown sugar shaken espresso, a zydeco biscuit (boudin, eggs, garlic pepper aioli) or some blueberry compote-lemon mascarpone "bonuts" for a sugar rush to catch those beads. Acclaimed New Orleans Chef Eric Cook (Gris-Gris, Saint John) is owner Erica Duthu's mentor.

AGENDA

FEB 8

Pork Butt Cook-Off

Hosted by the Rotary Club of Downtown Houma at the Courthouse Square. Enjoy a day of family fun with mouthwatering barbecue, pork butt creations from cooking teams, live music and a kids' zone with bounce houses and face painting.

FEB 15

Rayne Mardi Gras Parade and Gumbo Cook-Off

Presented by the Rayne Chamber of Commerce. Head to the after party for the raffles, a gumbo cook-off and gumbo tastings (for just $5), then hit the dance floor to shake, rattle and roll.

FEB 15

Louisiana King Cake Festival

Celebrate all things king cake in downtown Thibodaux featuring vendors, live music and king cakes galore. Helps support funding for the Lafourche Education Foundation that has awarded $681,000 in teacher grants since 2006.

FEB 20-22

The 20th Annual Eagle Expo

Experience boat tours in the heart of the Atchafalaya Basin to see nesting eagles and other birds. Includes presentations by wildlife and birding experts, dinner with guest speakers and walking tours in Bayou Teche National Wildlife Refuge.

FEB 23 - MARCH 25

Azaleas in Bloom

The annual azalea Bloom Watch features 25 miles of floral splendor along the Lafayette Azalea Trail through historic districts, the university and oil center, downtown and neighborhood garden districts.

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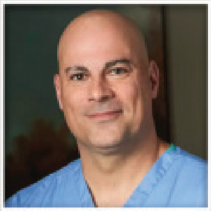

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CARENCRO

Tips for Crawfish Cravings

To find which seafood markets and restaurants have the best crawfish and prices in your area, download The Crawfish App with over 1,550 businesses listing live and boiled prices. Crawfish emerged earlier than they did last year and are at their peak in March, which is good news for seafood lovers, seafood markets and restaurants like Barry's 1965 that recently opened in downtown Carencro. Owners Barry and Rhonda Reeves (former owners of the Crawfish House & Grill in Opelousas) came out of retirement to open the rustic 60-seat dining room (formerly Swanky's) overlooking Main Street, now flanked by a 70-seat patio used primarily for crawfish season. Beyond seafood, the rooster gumbo is a must.

YOUNGSVILLE

Right On Cue

Check out Youngsville's hip new hot spot, the 4,500-square-foot Black Bull Sports Bar & Pool Hall featuring a stage (for DJs and live music) and a menu that lists more cocktails than food items. Enjoy hefty burgers and such fan favorites as mozzarella cheese bites, steak tacos and jumbo chicken wings while sampling an array of specialty cocktails, creative martinis and classics. You can catch the NCAA's March Madness college tournament (March 18-April 7) and the continuing NBA season on Black Bull's eight 75-inch TVs.

AGENDA

FEBRUARY 23

Krewe of Barkus

Registration for the title of "Mystical Dog" (the most striking costumed pup among all the costumed pets and their owners participating in the annual downtown parade) is at 11:30 am, corner of Ryan and Broad; parade starts at 1 pm.

MARCH 11-MARCH 15

11th Annual Teche Plein Air Painting Competition

Now hosted by the City of New Iberia, the annual week-long juried competition attracts artists from afar to paint outdoors in seven Acadiana parishes. Free paint-out, art exhibit, awards ceremony and silent auction.

MARCH 20-22

The Iowa Rabbit Festival and Cook-Off

A major event inside Burton Coliseum includes a rabbit show, vendor booths, a carnival, pageants, live entertainment by local and national artists and the Rabbit Cook-Off featuring a diversity of categories and the popular People's Choice Award.

MARCH 22

Jeanerette Creole Festival and Gumbo Cook-Off

Spend a day on the banks of Bayou Teche at the Jeanerette Creole Festival and Gumbo Cook-Off at the historic Albania Mansion. Enjoy food vendors, music, kids' activities, arts and crafts booths, health screening and tours.

MARCH 29

Twin Fest Louisiana

Celebrates twins, multiples and the people who love them with contests, music, food, crafts and games at the downtown Houma courthouse.

Top Lawyers

2025 | Acadiana PROFILE

Acadiana Profile Magazine has partnered with **Professional Research Services (PRS)** to provide our readers with a survey of Top Lawyers in the 22 parish region of Acadiana.

Top Acadiana Lawyers coming in the 2025 April/May issue

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CHERÉ COEN

Dog Friendly

Watching a dog race around a park with like-minded canines cheers the heart. They're so happy! It's like a playdate for children, only one for those with four legs. It's also nice for our pooches to tag along as we enjoy spring weather at restaurants, breweries and special events. And it's easy to do in Lafayette, a dog-friendly town where canine companions are welcome just about everywhere.

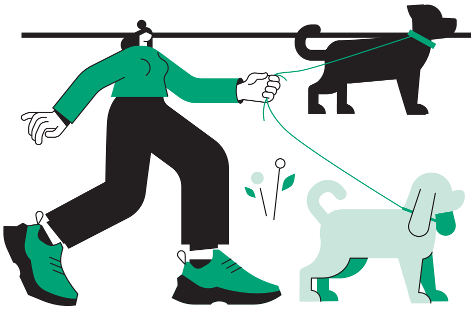
Gone to the Dogs

Bring your pet to the weekly Lafayette Farmers and Artisans Market at Moncus Park or join one of the many special events happening throughout the year by Acadiana Animal Aid. For something truly unique, Krewe des Chien honors its four-legged friends every Carnival season, this year's parade on Feb. 22. Not only does this Mardi Gras parade feature canines of every stripe and size, but crowns its dogs as royalty, too. Proceeds from the annual parade help animal rescue groups in Acadiana.

PHOTO COURTESY ADOPTED DOG BREWING

DOG FRIENDLY RESTAURANTS AND BARS

It's easy to find dog-friendly eateries and bars throughout Lafayette. **Adopted Dog Brewing**, for instance, owes its name to the four-legged species, serving up craft beers and bar food from its taproom and a dog-friendly outdoor space. Downtown's **Spoonbill Watering Hole & Restaurant** used to be a gas station so it comes with an outdoor patio that's perfect for craft cocktails and South Louisiana favorites where dogs can rest easy. Even **Borden's Ice Cream Shoppe** on Jefferson Street welcomes dogs, serving them a Pup Scoop topped with a Milk Bone biscuit.



DOG PARKS

Moncus Park (moncuspark.org) in the heart of Lafayette separates its dog parks by hound size. Both the **Giles Automotive Family Small Dog Park** and the **Best Friends Bark Park for Large Dogs** are open daily for dogs to enjoy each other's company without a leash. Make sure to have a permit for your dog; these ensure that dogs have been vaccinated and spayed or neutered. Leashed dogs without permits may roam the larger Moncus Park and throughout other city parks. Some city parks offer non-leash parks as well.

50 YEARS Acadiana Center for the Arts

PERFORMANCES

February 20
Jake Blount
AcA & UL Concert Series Collaboration

February 23
Andrew Armstrong
The Listening Room Chamber Music Series

March 9
Orit Wolf
The Listening Room Chamber Music Series

March 20
Portrait of Ludmilla as Nina Simone
Spotlight Theatre & Dance Series

April 4
Black Joe Lewis & the Honeybears
AllStars Series

May 1
Ghost-Note
AllStars Series

May 15
Louis Michot: Rêve du Troubadour
Louisiana Crossroads Series

See our calendar

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Cooking on the Run

HOW THE COMMUNAL MARDI GRAS GUMBO GETS MADE

MOST OF US HAVE HEARD about masked revelers chasing chickens and gathering ingredients for a gumbo during Cajun country Mardi Gras, but what happens after the masks come off? Communal gumbos are a traditional end to long runs through the countryside leading up to Mardi Gras day. Revelers put on a show in hopes of gathering items like live chickens, onions and rice for the gumbo pot.

Historian and folklorist Barry Jean Ancelet writes in his book "From Behind the Mask: Essays on South Louisiana Mardi Gras Runs" that the prized offering is a live chicken, but other ingredients, including green onions and parsley pilfered from the garden, are needed. Store-bought chickens have replaced live ones over the years for a variety of reasons.

"Historically, they may have been made with chickens caught that day, but the problem is farmers were giving out old chickens and roosters and those take hours and hours to tenderize," Ancelet explains. "When I first started running in Mamou, the gumbo was made with the chickens they caught in a big black iron kettle next to the building. The meat was pretty chewy … What has happened is people have started the gumbo earlier. Another strategy is to have the gumbo on a different day. The Grand Marais run is on Saturday and Sunday and the gumbo on Tuesday night, so they have time to actually use the chickens they caught."

People who volunteer to cook the gumbo are often older members of the crew that don't want to run anymore. They all have their secrets for making flavorful gumbo for a crowd, but Ancelet says it's all about how you cook the birds. "Older poultry does make a better broth," he says, but the gumbo needs more time to steep. The true taste of a Mardi Gras gumbo comes from a variety of poultry, since runners were often given chickens, roosters, duck and guinea. Ancelet's favorite is a blend of hen and guinea.

He shares his mother's recipe for Mardi Gras Gumbo, which feeds 100 people, right. It was developed in the early 1980s to feed the crowds who gather after the traditional Ossun Mardi Gras run on Tuesday. ■

MARDI GRAS GUMBO

(FOR 100 PEOPLE) FROM MAUDE ANCELET

- 7 cups **oil** for roux
- 12 cups **flour**
- 55 lbs. **chicken**, cut up
- 15-18 lbs. fresh **pork** sausage, browned well and cut into bite-size pieces
- 2 quarts smothered **okra**
- 16-18 large **onions**, chopped
- 12 large **bell peppers**, chopped
- 1½ whole bunches of **celery** stalks, chopped
- 12 cloves **garlic**, chopped
- 10 **chicken bouillon cubes**
- 6 ounces of **Johnson's seasoning** or equivalent such as Tony Chachere's
- **Salt** and **pepper** to taste
- 8½ gallons **water**
- 3 bunches **green onion tops**, chopped
- 2-3 bunches fresh **parsley**, chopped

The Acadian Arts

MUSIC

Cajun Mardi Gras Festival in Eunice has five days of live music and street dances Feb. 28-March 4, 2025. eunicemardigras.com

ART

Krewe de Canailles' walking parade in Downtown Lafayette with handmade costumes and throws Feb. 21, 2025. krewedecanailles.com

LITERATURE

"From Behind the Mask: Essays on South Louisiana Mardi Gras Runs" by Barry Jean Ancelet available from UL Press. ulpress.org

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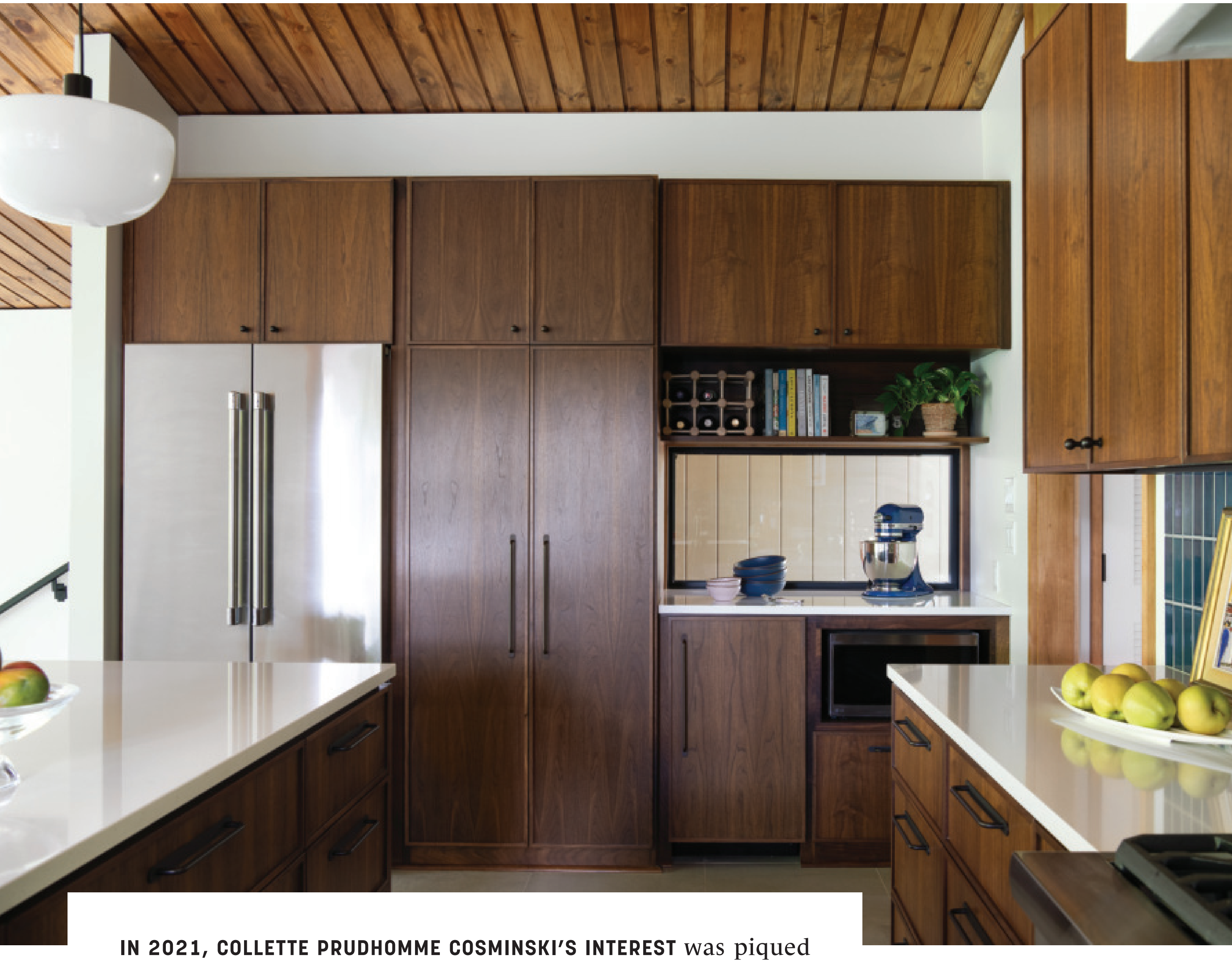
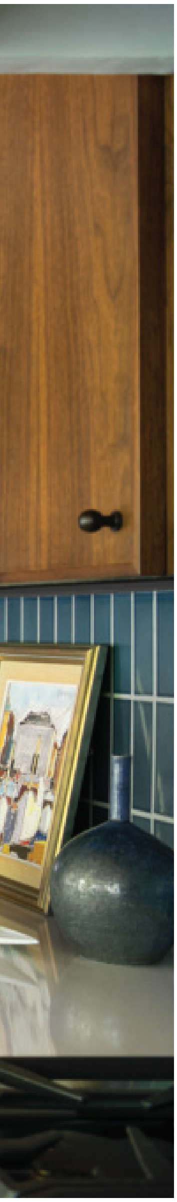
Restorative Renovation

AN ATOMIC-AGE RANCH IN **BENDEL GARDENS** GETS A GLOW-UP BEFITTING ITS MIDCENTURY ROOTS



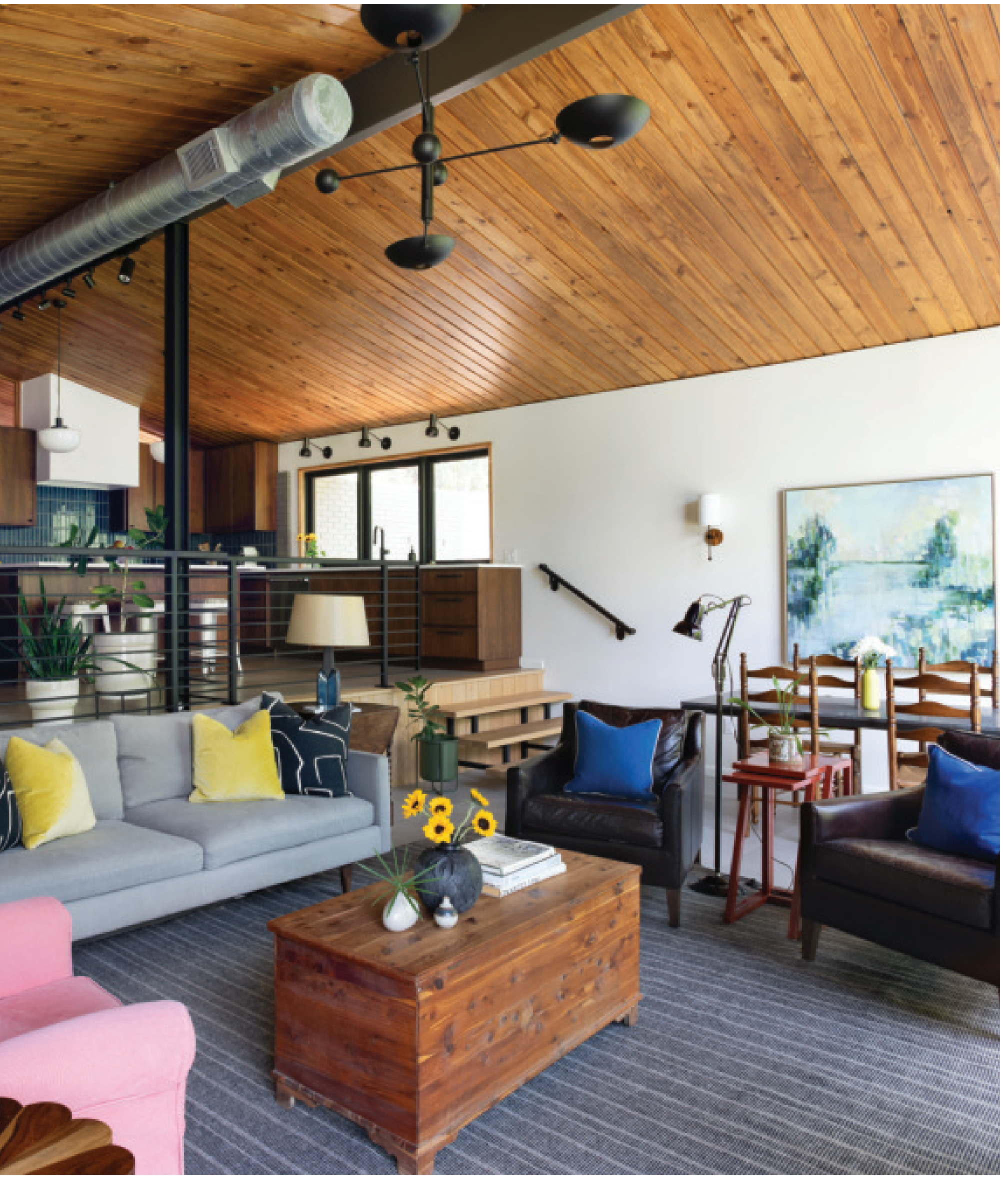
IN 2021, COLLETTE PRUDHOMME COSMINSKI'S INTEREST was piqued when she spied a listing for a midcentury modern home for sale in Lafayette's Bendel Gardens neighborhood. "I was flipping through the pictures [and thought], oh, my gosh, that's going to be a great renovation. I would love to be part of that," said Cosminski, an architect, interior designer and assistant professor at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette School of Architecture and Design. Soon after, Cosminski received an email from the home's new owner seeking her design expertise with the project, which would take approximately a year to complete.

Designer Collette Prudhomme Cosminski and builder Ryan Baldridge of Provence Homes worked with natural materials for the renovation. The kitchen's custom walnut cabinetry warms up hard finishes like the quartz countertops and hand-painted, hand-fired ceramic tile backsplash.



The circa 1960s home was designed by the late architect David L. Perkins, an associate professor of architecture at Southwestern Louisiana Industrial Institute, or what is now the University of Louisiana at Lafayette, said to be instrumental in beginning the architectural department at the school. Perkins designed several homes in the tony Bendel Gardens neighborhood. Dated contemporary-style finishes (think brown and gray speckled granite countertops and brushed cream beige mosaic bathroom tile), rotted wood, an original aggregate roof beyond saving and inefficient hand-crank, louvered windows, coupled with the homeowner's desire for a more

(Left top) The cabinets above the countertop in the utility room were salvaged from the original interior, restored and rebuilt with new doors. (Bottom) Half of the carport was enclosed to increase the interior space without adding onto the home. (Right) Cosminski and Baldridge removed a half-bath and closet from between the original galley kitchen to open the space into the sunken living room.



open floorplan called for taking it down to the studs.

"The owner was fearless," said Cosminski. "She took on way more than I think anybody else would have with the renovation. You had to have a creative eye to see past what it was at the time."

Cosminski worked with builder Ryan Baldridge of Provence Homes. While the renovation can't be considered a true restoration, the team was attentive to the tenets of midcentury modern design, especially keeping clean lines, using natural materials, favoring open floor plans and integrating the home with nature. The result is a serene, high-function space with enviable bayou views, custom millwork highlighting the architecture and playful details. But there were a lot of challenges to overcome to achieve the owner's vision of staying true to the architecture.

"The houses that we have to get creative to find ways to get everything to work properly are usually the ones that we have the most pride in and love for," said Baldridge. "We all put a lot of love and sweat into this one. Getting it right. So it's one of those projects."

One of the biggest technical challenges was how to hang lighting. The home was designed with no space or material between the interior tongue and groove wood ceiling and the exterior aggregate roof (also known as tar and gravel). To solve the problem, Baldridge and his team ran the wiring on top of the roof, which was ultimately replaced with painted metal. The process involved special wiring and layers of waterproofing with specialty tape, foam and wood. "It was another structurally hard thing to do because we had to know the exact locations of these lights because there was no moving them," said Baldridge.

The three-bedroom home gained space without an addition by enclosing half of the two-car carport to create a mudroom. As much as Cosminski and Baldridge's plan included adding walls, removing them (as well as a half-bath and closet separating the original gallery kitchen and sunken living room) was essential to open the layout and maximize the floor-to-ceiling views in the back of the house. With the owner's love of cooking in mind, Cosminski designed a jewel box of a kitchen featuring quartz countertops, a blue-toned backsplash with hand-fired, hand-painted ceramic tile, Thermador appliances and show-stopping custom walnut cabinetry. White oak stairs lead to the living room and the material is repeated to cover the area behind the treads. The home's low-slung, sloping roofline is played up in the great room by stained pine that extends to an exterior overhang, connecting the space with the outdoors.

"It's a sanctuary, and very calming," says Cosminski. "Like a treehouse." ■

KEEP IT
Light

HEALTHY, SEASONAL DISHES

PHOTOS BY EUGENIA UHL

RECIPES BY LIZ WILLIAMS

TIP

Be sure to scrape the bottom of the pan with the edge of your spoon to collect the bits that stick to the bottom. They are the key to maximum flavor.

CHICKEN PAPRIKAS

SERVES 6- 8

2 tablespoons olive oil or canola oil
3 ½ pounds skinless, bone-in chicken thighs
2 cups onions, finely chopped
2 cloves garlic, minced
4 tablespoons sweet Hungarian paprika
2 teaspoons black pepper
½ cup crushed tomatoes
2 cups unsalted chicken broth
2 teaspoons flour
1 cup low-fat Greek yogurt
Additional paprika for garnish
One orange

Let's face it, we are hardwired to want to eat more in winter.

ALTHOUGH EARLY HUMANS might have needed to put on weight in the winter, when food was harder to come by and to stave off the cold, we don't face those same problems in the modern world. But rather than deny ourselves the pleasures of winter fruits and vegetables, I suggest that we just think about how to best prepare those winter dishes to emphasize flavor without depending upon butter and salt.

I don't believe in deprivation. We all want food that is high in flavor. We want food that is inviting. So even if we are trying to make our food healthier, let's think about how to make it taste delicious so that we forget about what it isn't and think about how good it is.

Let's not deep fry the chicken. We don't need a skillet full of oil. This version of fried chicken is full of Louisiana spices and gets a crispy coating if you don't crowd the pieces. It even works when you make the pieces skinless. Chicken Paprikas tastes so rich you won't notice the lack of sour cream. The stuffed pork loin will make a special dinner for company for a winter party. And the meatballs provide that comfort food touch for a cold winter's day.

Remember, it's all about flavor. If you want to remove fat, change the protein or reduce sugar, the way to do it is add spices, create layers of flavor and caramelize your vegetables. No one will know what you've done, but they will know that their dinner is delicious.

① Heat oil in a large frying pan. Brown chicken, about 5 minutes on each side. Remove to a plate.

② In the same frying pan, sauté onions and garlic for 7 to 10 minutes. Add black pepper and paprika; sauté for 1 minute, stirring constantly.

③ Add crushed tomatoes and chicken broth. Stir and allow to simmer for 5 minutes.

④ Add chicken back into the pan. Cover and cook for 30 minutes or until the chicken is completely cooked.

⑤ Stir the flour into the yogurt in a small bowl. Add the mixture to the pan. Simmer until the sauce thickens, about 15 minutes.

⑧ Serve over cooked egg noodles. Garnish with a sprinkle of paprika. For a nice brightness, grate orange zest onto each serving.

MEATBALLS

MAKES ABOUT 20 TO 24 MEATBALLS

1	pound lean ground beef
1	pound ground turkey
1	cup breadcrumbs
2	tablespoons dried Italian seasoning spice blend
¼	teaspoon garlic powder
½	cup grated Parmesan cheese
1	egg, beaten with a fork
	Salt and pepper to taste
	Chopped basil for garnish

PREHEAT oven to 350 F.

PLACE all ingredients in a bowl and mix together gently with your hands. When the mixture is uniform, use a ⅛ cup measuring cup or ice cream scoop to remove a scoop of the mixture. Shape the mixture gently into a ball and place the complete meatballs on a Silpat sheet on a baking sheet.

PLACE in the preheated oven for 15 to 20 minutes until browned. Remove from oven and place on a platter. Garnish with chopped basil.

TIP

Meatballs don't have to be fatty or even too meaty. If we eat them like the Italians do, they are small. Using a turkey and lean beef mixture with breadcrumbs, we can lighten the meatballs. By making them smaller than most American meatballs, we can get a better handle on portion size.

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You can make the soup a day ahead. It tastes even better the next day.

Butternut Squash Soup

SERVES 4 TO 6

- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 2 shallots, minced
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 2-pound butternut squash, roasted, peeled, seeded and cut into cubes
- 2 medium carrots, cut into coins
- 2 large potatoes, peeled and cubed
- 4 cups unsalted vegetable or unsalted chicken stock (use vegetable stock for a completely vegan soup)
- 2 tablespoons prepared curry powder
- 1 tablespoon grated fresh ginger

For garnish

- 12 tablespoons coconut cream
- ½ cup sunflower seeds
- bunch of cilantro, chopped

① Heat olive oil in a soup pot until it glistens. Add shallots and garlic and sauté for 5 minutes. Add squash, carrots, potatoes, stock and 1 tablespoon of curry powder. Bring to a boil, then reduce heat to a simmer. Cook for 45 minutes, covered.

② Remove the cover and add the ginger and the other tablespoon of curry powder. Continue cooking for 10 minutes.

③ Allow the soup to cool for 10 minutes, then purée with an immersion blender. Purée until completely smooth. (You can use a food processor, but ladle some of the vegetables and liquid into the processor bowl and process until smooth. Be very careful because the mixture is hot and might splash.)

④ Return the smooth soup to the pot and bring to a simmer. Serve in bowls. Garnish with 1 or 2 tablespoons of coconut cream, 1 tablespoon of sunflower seeds and chopped cilantro.

APPLES WITH ONIONS

SERVES 4

2 tablespoons olive oil

½ pound onions, thinly sliced

½ pound of Granny Smith apples, cored and coarsely chopped

Juice of one lemon

Freshly ground black pepper

¼ cup lemon balm leaves or parsley, chopped, for garnish

① Heat the oil in a large, deep skillet, until it shimmers. Add the onions and continue to cook on low, stirring occasionally, for 20 minutes. Add the apples. Cook, stirring occasionally to keep them from sticking, for 15 minutes.

② Stir in the lemon juice and stir to distribute throughout the dish. Transfer to a bowl, sprinkle with pepper or grind the pepper over the bowl. Be generous. Sprinkle with the chopped herbs and serve.

↑ The recipe calls for Granny Smith apples. But there is no hard and fast rule. Here, we've use red apples. If you prefer a Red Delicious or any other type of apple, use what you like. Recipes are suggestions to spark your imagination. You can even have a mix of apples. It's up to you.

BROCCOLI RICE

1½	cups uncooked brown rice
3	cups unsalted vegetable stock or unsalted chicken stock
3	tablespoons olive oil
1	medium onion, chopped finely
4	cloves garlic, minced
16	ounces low-fat Greek yogurt
1	pound broccoli florets, steamed
1	cup breadcrumbs
½	cup grated Parmesan cheese
1	tablespoon dried Italian seasoning

COOK the rice with the stock in a pot or a rice cooker, until done. Adjust the amount of liquid to the instructions of your particular rice cooker.

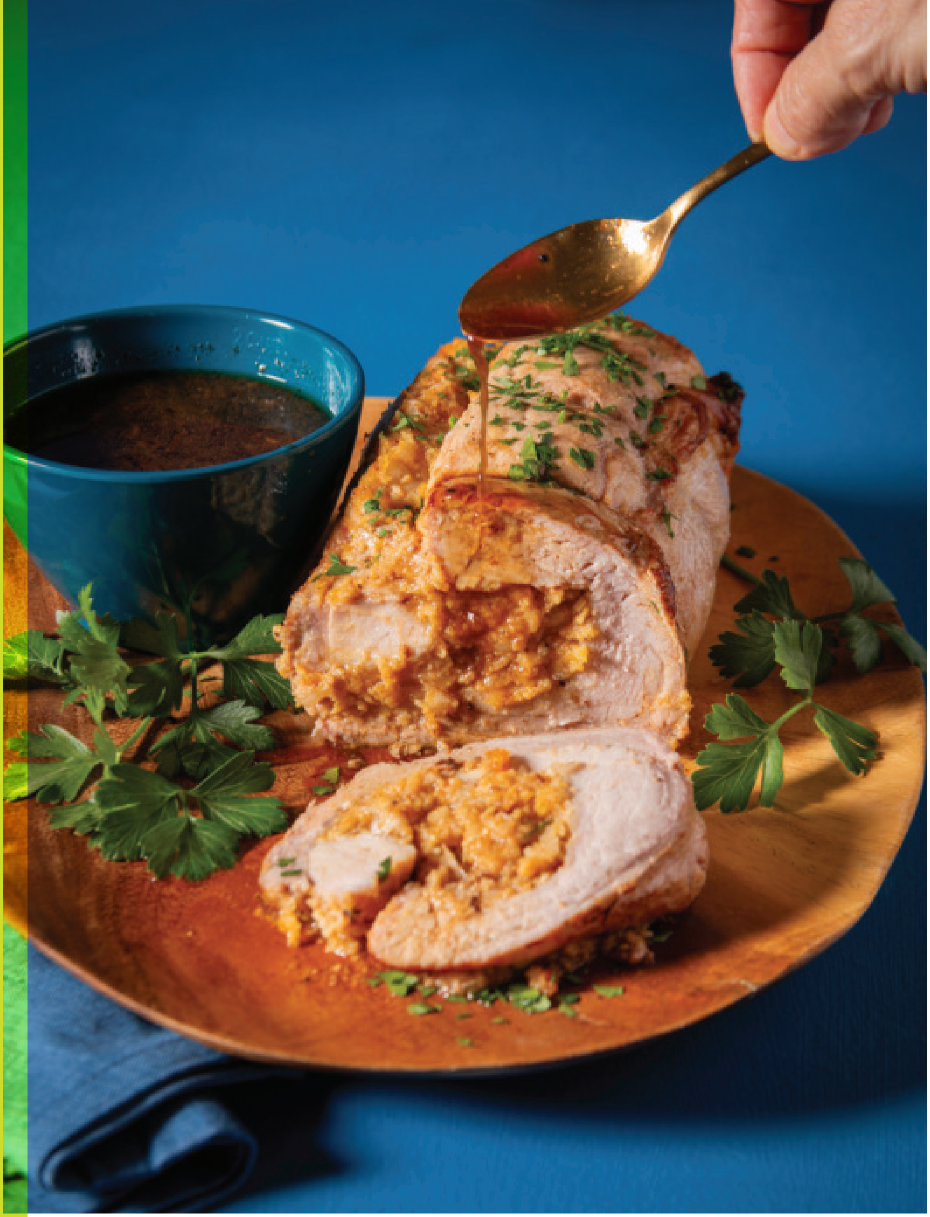
IN A SKILLET heat 2 tablespoons of olive oil and sauté the onion and garlic, stirring occasionally for 5 minutes. Place the sautéed mixture in a large mixing bowl. Add the cooked rice, yogurt and broccoli. Stir gently but thoroughly to disperse the yogurt throughout the rice and to ensure that the broccoli is evenly distributed.

IN A SMALL BOWL mix the breadcrumbs, cheese, dried seasoning and 1 tablespoon olive oil. Be sure to distribute the oil all through the mixture.

PLACE the rice and broccoli mixture in a 13 x 9 inch pan. Use a spatula to spread the mixture into 1 even layer. Bake for 20 to 25 minutes until the breadcrumbs are golden. Serve.

TIP

You don't have to limit yourself to broccoli in this recipe. You can substitute cauliflower or even cubed butternut squash or cubed zucchini. A combination of vegetables also works well. Let your imagination run wild.



STUFFED PORK LOIN

6 SERVINGS

- 2 cups cornbread breadcrumbs
- 1 onion, chopped fine
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 tablespoon chili spice mix
- 1 teaspoon ground cumin
- 2½-pound pork loin, butterflied
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 cup salt-free chicken broth
- ½ cup chopped parsley for garnish

❶ Preheat oven to 325 F.

❷ Mix all of the ingredients except the pork in a bowl and whisk together thoroughly.

❸ Place the butterflied pork loin between 2 sheets of plastic wrap and using a flat tenderizer mallet or a wine bottle, pound the surface of the pork to ensure that the meat is of uniform thickness.

❹ Remove the top piece of plastic wrap and spread the bread mixture evenly on the meat. Roll the meat to make a long jelly roll. With kitchen string, tie the meat to keep it tightly rolled while cooking.

❺ In a skillet or roasting pan large enough to hold the roll, add the tablespoons of olive oil and heat until it shimmers. Add the roll and brown on all sides. Then, place the pan in the preheated oven for 45 minutes.

❻ Remove the pork to a platter and deglaze the pan with the chicken broth, making sure to scrape the bits that stick to the bottom of the pan into the broth. Allow to cook for 5 minutes. It is okay to stir in any of the stuffing that has fallen out. It will only add to the flavor.

❼ While the broth is cooking, remove the string from the roll. Then pour the pan juices over the pork loin. Garnish with chopped parsley. Serve sliced.

This recipe competes pretty well with traditional fried chicken.

Crispy Oven Chicken

SERVES 4

Egg Wash
1 egg
2 cups buttermilk

Chicken
2 pounds boneless, skinless chicken thighs or a combination of thighs and breasts
2 tablespoons olive oil
1 bunch parsley, chopped for garnish

Coating
1 cup flour
½ cup unseasoned breadcrumbs or plain Panko
1 teaspoon baking powder
2 teaspoons ground paprika
½ teaspoon cayenne (to taste)
1 teaspoon garlic powder
1 teaspoon onion powder
1 teaspoon ground black pepper

PREHEAT oven to 400 F. Place a dark-colored rimmed baking pan in the oven to heat.

CRACK the egg into a large bowl. Beat with a fork. Add the buttermilk and beat gently to combine the egg and buttermilk. Set aside.

MIX the dry ingredients in a bowl with a whisk to combine well. This is the coating.

CUT the chicken pieces into strips 2 inches wide. Place the chicken in the buttermilk mixture and toss with tongs to coat the pieces.

DREDGE the chicken piece by piece in the coating. Dredge each piece a second time by first dipping the piece in buttermilk and then the coating. (You can omit the second coating if the first dredging seems sufficiently thick.)

REMOVE the pan from the oven and pour half of the olive oil into the pan. Use a brush to spread the oil over the whole surface of the pan.

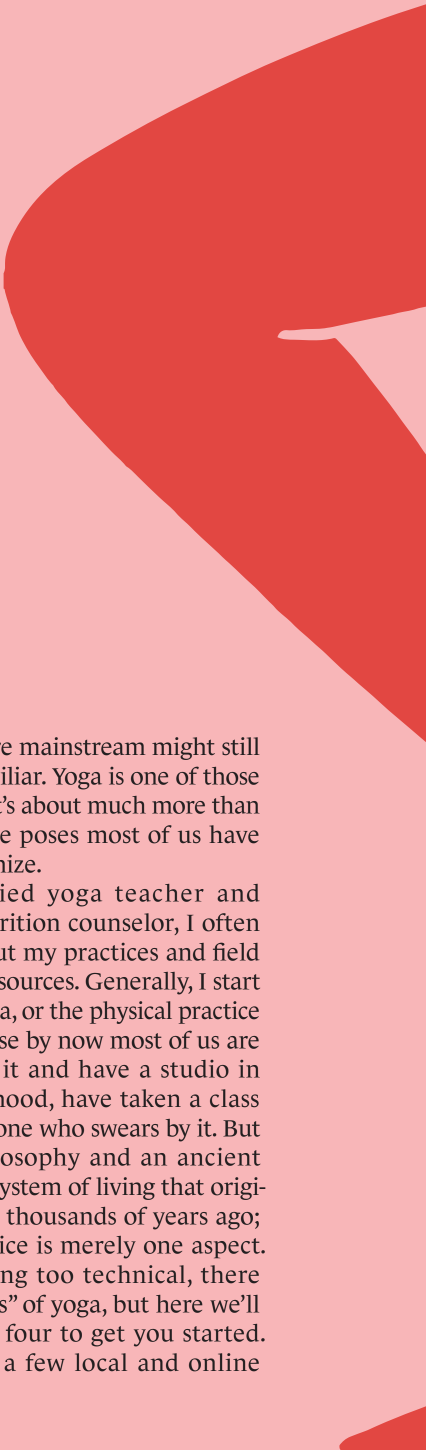
PLACE each piece of chicken on the hot pan and return to the hot oven. Cook for 10 to 12 minutes, depending on the size of the pieces. Carefully flip each piece. Add the rest of the oil to the pan, if needed. Return to the oven and cook an additional 10 minutes and serve, garnished with chopped parsley and more paprika.

By Melanie Warner Spencer

HOLISTIC HEALTH 101

A PRIMER ON PRACTICES TO NURTURE YOUR MIND, BODY AND SPIRIT FOR COMPLETE WELLNESS

THE WORD "WELLNESS" OFTEN GETS A BAD RAP.

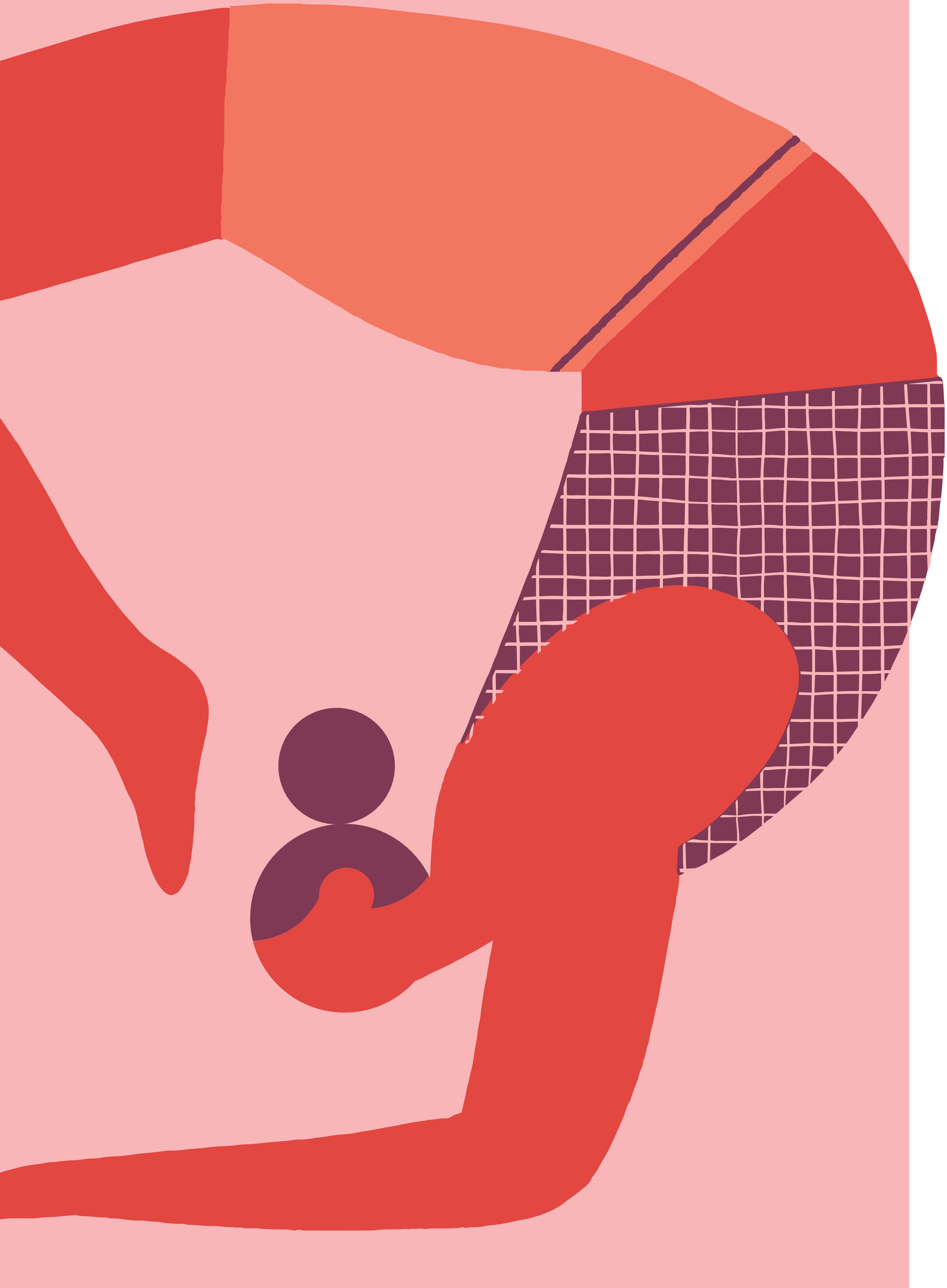


We lump it into the ever-growing pile of unscientific woo-woo with jade eggs (for the unfamiliar, Google this along with actress and lifestyle guru Gwyneth Paltrow's name) or sleeping with onions on your feet. But wellness simply means being in a state of good health. And who doesn't want that? As Western science begins to catch up with Eastern, indigenous and folk practices, we are learning that good health is about more than physical vitality. The fitness of our minds and spirits is not only connected to physical health, but also essential to our overall well-being. In a region that embraces Creole and Cajun traiteurs, or faith healers, the interconnection of mind, body and spirit is not a foreign concept, but some practices that are gaining the attention of the medical community and becoming more mainstream might still be a bit unfamiliar. Yoga is one of those practices and it's about much more than the pretzel-like poses most of us have come to recognize.

As a certified yoga teacher and Ayurvedic nutrition counselor, I often get asked about my practices and field requests for resources. Generally, I start with yoga asana, or the physical practice of yoga, because by now most of us are familiar with it and have a studio in our neighborhood, have taken a class or know someone who swears by it. But yoga is a philosophy and an ancient whole-health system of living that originated in India thousands of years ago; physical practice is merely one aspect. Without getting too technical, there are eight "arms" of yoga, but here we'll focus on only four to get you started. I'll also offer a few local and online

PODCAST **"The Pulse with MAPI.com" hosted by Śankari Wegman, Ph.D., an Ayurvedic clinician, lecturer and health coach.**

APPS



Headspace
Great for beginning meditators, Headspace teaches users how to meditate. It was created by a healthcare company that specializes in mental health and uses research-based tools to help people improve metal health and wellness.

Insight Timer
Get pre-recorded and live guided meditation, breathwork, yoga, soundbaths, classes and workshops from teachers around the globe.

Calm
Daily guided meditation, movement, breathing, music and sleep offerings, as well as courses from notable teachers with some of your favorite actors voicing the sleep stories.

resources so you can slowly add the practices that resonate into your wellness toolbox.

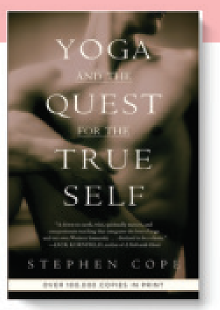
LET'S GET PHYSICAL: YOGA ASANA

According to Johns Hopkins Medicine, yoga asana can increase strength, balance, flexibility, mobility, stress, pain relief, sleep, heart health, energy and moods. The military and medical communities have both begun integrating yoga asana into health and wellness programming and physical and mental health therapies. The "poses" or "shapes" in yoga are not only designed to stretch, lengthen and strengthen, but also to help us increase the awareness of our bodies, so we notice when something is "off" and can be proactive about finding balance through lifestyle changes or the right treatments and therapies. A yoga asana practice can also have a spiritual element, especially given the tradition it originated in considered it a way to commune with the divine. Whatever your faith tradition, however, feel free to incorporate spirituality into your practice. Yoga isn't just for the already strong and flexible. It's truly for everybody and every body. From chair (or even bed) yoga to hot yoga, there is something for everyone. Popular styles include Vinyasa, Iyengar, Hatha, Kundalini, Bikram, Ashtanga and Yin, but there are others as well, so check out your local studio and experiment with styles and teachers to find the best fit for your level of ability and comfort zone.

JUST BREATHE: PRANAYAMIC YOGA

Our modern lives with constant demands on our attention via devices, divisive politics, fast-paced work and social lives, traffic woes, caregiving young children and parents — well, you get the idea —are not conducive to relaxation. This can lead to our sympathetic nervous systems staying in a state of constant fight or flight, leaving us in a vicious cycle of anxiety, insomnia and fatigue and on the road to long-term health issues like high blood pressure and heart disease if left unchecked. According to Harvard Health, breath control, also known as breathwork or pranayama, can help by activating our parasympathetic nervous system, or rest and digest mode. Yoga provides a long list of pranayamic breathing techniques to help with a variety of issues, but the common denominator is controlling the breath. By simply focusing on the breath and learning how to breathe fully through the diaphragm (or belly breathing), we can change the way we engage with stress and our daily lives. Full and complete breath has myriad benefits, including oxygenating cells and strengthening the lungs and the immune system. Breathwork is often incorporated into yoga asana, so a great way to learn is to take a yoga class. There are also a wealth of apps (see the sidebar) and online articles and video tutorials through Yoga International, Yoga Journal and the Kripalu Center for Yoga & Health, to name a few.

BOOKS



"Yoga and the Quest for the True Self"
by Stephen Cope
This book will teach you what yoga is all about and how it can help you live more authentically.

PODCAST **"Everyday Ayurveda & Yoga at Hale Pule" with founder Myra Lewin, author, Ayurvedic practitioner, Ayurveda yoga therapist, Yoga Alliance certified yoga teacher and master yogini.**

MEDITATE FOR HEALTH: YOGA DHARANA

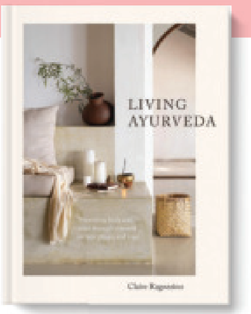
If there is a meditator in your life, chances are they've shared the benefits with you and it sounds too good to be true. While meditation, or yoga dharana, isn't a panacea, it can have remarkable benefits. The list from the Mayo Clinic is long and includes focus, relaxation, better sleep, improved mood, lower stress, less fatigue, changes in negative thought patterns, lower anxiety and depression, improved health and help in managing chronic pain, asthma, cancer, heart disease, high blood pressure, sleep problems, digestive issues and post-traumatic stress disorder. OK, on second thought, maybe meditation is a panacea. What are you waiting for? A misnomer about meditation is that it means clearing your mind. That's impossible. Rather, it's about noticing when your mind is wandering. Simply focus on or count your breath, notice when you start thinking about your to-do list or what to have for lunch and redirect your attention back to the breath. Find guidance using the apps in the sidebar and practice, practice, practice.

EAT LIKE A YOGI: FOOD AS MEDICINE

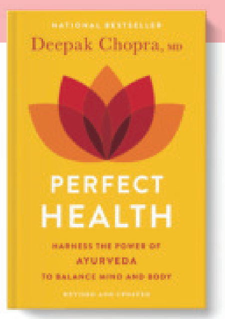
Yoga has a sister science called Ayurveda, which is a 3,000-year-old medical system. An integral element of Ayurveda is nutrition, or the sattvic diet. This way of eating focuses on fresh, whole foods, easing digestion and a philosophy that food can be both medicine and poison, depending on how and what you eat. Those familiar with anti-inflammatory diets will see similarities and in fact, some anti-inflammatory diets are inspired by The Ayurvedic way of eating. There are limitless options online for Ayurvedic counseling and treatment. A great resource is the Ayurvedic Institute in Asheville, North Carolina. In Lafayette, Mary Ann Smith, in addition to being co-owner and instructor at Mantra Yoga, is an Ayurvedic practitioner, which means she can guide clients in lifestyle practices such as diet, as well as prescribe herbs and supplements for treatment or overall health and wellness. There are also Ayurvedic doctors and Ayurvedic nutrition counselors online and in the region, so if you plan to seek services, be sure to do your research and learn what each one is qualified to do (or not do) in the scope of their practice.

THE JOURNEY STARTS WITH BABY STEPS

Yoga, whichever style or "arm" you choose, is all about moderation, so start small and pick only one of the above. Once you get into a good routine with a new practice, add one more and so on. As always, check with your doctor before changing your diet or exercise routine, but don't be surprised if when you tell doc about your new yoga practic, they give you a high five. ■



"Living Ayurveda: Nourishing Body and Mind through Seasonal Recipes, Rituals, and Yoga"
by Claire Ragozzino
An incredible resource for beginners and seasoned yoga practitioners, this book takes the reader through a year of Ayurvedic living with guides, resources, recipes, gorgeous photos and practical wisdom.



"Perfect Health: The Complete Mind/Body Guide"
by Deepak Chopra, M.D.
This book breaks down the art and science of Ayurveda through the lens of this ancient medical system and current Western research and medical science.

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307 DOCTORS IN 47 SPECIALTIES

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Castle Connolly's physician-led team of researchers follows a rigorous screening process to select top doctors on both the national and regional levels. Its online nomination process is open to all licensed physicians in America who are able to nominate physicians in any medical specialty and in any part of the country, as well as indicate whether the nominated physician(s) is, in their opinion, among the best in their region in their medical specialty or among the best in the nation in their medical specialty. Then, Castle Connolly's research team thoroughly vets each physician's professional qualifications, education, hospital and faculty appointments, research leadership, professional reputation, disciplinary history and if available, outcomes data. Additionally, a physician's interpersonal skills such as listening and communicating effectively, demonstrating empathy, and instilling trust and confidence, are also considered in the review process. The Castle Connolly Doctor Directory is the largest network of peer-nominated physicians in the nation.

In addition to Top Doctors, Castle Connolly's research team also identifies Rising Stars, early career doctors who are emerging leaders in the medical community.

Physicians selected for inclusion in this magazine's "Top Doctors" and "Rising Stars" feature may also appear online at castleconnolly.com, or in conjunction with other Castle Connolly Top Doctors databases online and/or in print.

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Your heart delivers oxygen and nutrients to all of your tissues and organs, so keeping it strong is essential. Here are a few tips to ensure good heart health:

control portion sizes

eat more fruit and vegetables

limit unhealthy fats

limit and reduce sodium and salt

choose whole grains

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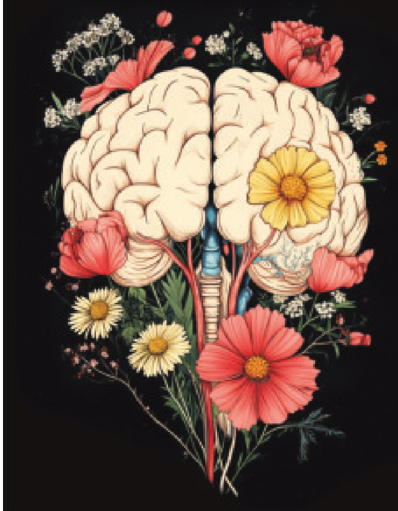

BRAIN HEALTH

If your brain isn't healthy, your body can't function at its full potential and learning and remembering will be more difficult. Here are a few tips to ensure good brain health:

exercise regularly

get lots of sleep

eat a Mediterranean diet

stay mentally active

remain socially involved

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Women Who Lead

April/May 2025 Issue

Upcoming in the April/May issue of Acadiana Profile magazine **Women Who Lead** is a special promotional section celebrating women. Acadiana Profile magazine will spotlight women who possess entrepreneurial spirit, professionalism and devotion to our local community. Each reservation includes professional writing and photography, highlighted in a weekly newsletter and visibility online for one year.

DEADLINE March 3rd

TO ADVERTISE CONTACT
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Rebecca@acadianaprofile.com

BONE HEALTH

Strong bones not only give structural support for your body, but they also anchor muscles and store calcium. Here are a few tips to ensure good bone health:

get sufficient calcium

take vitamin D

increase physical activity with weight-bearing activities

avoid smoking and alcohol

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THE FOOD ISSUE

SCAN TO SUBSCRIBE

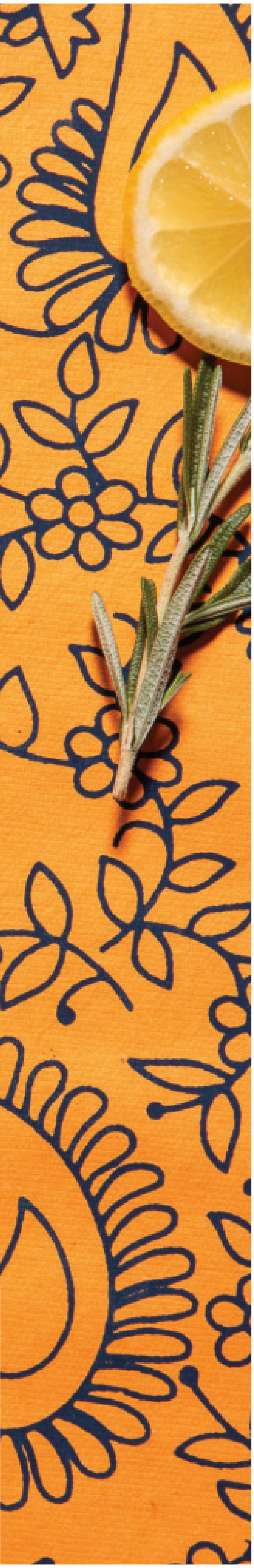
MELANIE WARNER SPENCER
EUGENIA UHL

Chimichurri sauce is a sweet and tangy accompaniment with a strong flavor profile that holds its own without overpowering when paired with meat.

Pure Love

VESTAL CHEF **SULLIVAN ZANT** FINDS FULLFILMENT IN FEEDING GUESTS AND HIS STAFF'S YOUNG MINDS

IF SULLIVAN ZANT hadn't dropped out of college his junior year, he would have represented the fourth generation of his family to become a high school teacher. But don't worry, it all worked out. About 13 years and a lot of hard work, persistence and talent later, Zant earned the title of Executive Chef at the popular contemporary Southern



MEET THE CHEF

Sullivan Zant

HOMETOWN Jennings/Lafayette • **MOST MEANINGFUL ITEM IN KITCHEN** Great grandfather's 12-quart, cast iron Dutch oven • **MUSIC TO COOK BY** Ambient music like early Daft Punk or Animal Crossing soundtrack. • **QUICK MEAL AT HOME** Raw food, beef or fish, or vegetables maybe in a quick tamari, shoyu or sriracha sauce. I keep it clean and simple.

restaurant Vestal in Lafayette, known for wood-grilled steak and seafood.

"I use my education more than I ever would have thought," said Zant. "Although I am a creative, I'm more of an educator than anything. That's what I spend the majority of my time doing — teaching, sharing information and coaching."

Zant is referring to the young kitchen staff at the Vestal and cites helping shape and develop their talents as one of the many satisfying aspects of his job, which has changed considerably since working his way through the ranks at the now-shuttered eateries Coyote Blues and Dark Roux. The latter is the farm-to-table restaurant where Zant worked as sous chef under chef-owner Ryan Trahan, who would later create the concept for Vestal. Zant was brought on as chef de cuisine under Trahan when Vestal opened in 2021. Upon Trahan's departure in 2023, Zant was named executive chef, where he wears countless hats beyond the toque as the kitchen's creative force, manager, scheduler, ordering wizard, grill master and, well, whatever else needs doing. The pressures of the job melt away, however, when Zant takes a moment to glance from the open kitchen into the dining room and catches someone taking that first bite, then nodding in approval to their dining companion.

"As I've grown older, I've learned how to slow down and appreciate the journey it's taken and all the work I've done to get here, how much I've sacrificed," said Zant. "And I'm very, very fortunate and privileged and happy. But I also know that I feel this fulfillment, and I'm in the position I am because I earned it. I'm thankful for it." ■

SAUCE

VESTAL CHIMICHURRI

"This Argentinian condiment is the perfect pairing with a flame grilled steak," says Zant. "The bold herbaceous and subtle citrus notes are a must have at our restaurant! This sauce is best made one day in advance to let the flavors of the herbs truly stand out."

PREP TIME: 20 MINUTES | **SERVES:** 8-10

1	cup **Italian parsley**, finely chopped
3	tablespoons **Italian oregano**, finely chopped
1	teaspoon **thyme**, finely chopped
1	teaspoon **rosemary**, finely chopped
¼	cup **shallot**, finely chopped
1	tablespoon **garlic**, finely chopped
¼	cup **lemon juice**
¾	cup **canola oil**
½	cup **extra virgin olive oil**
½	teaspoon **red pepper flakes**
2	teaspoons **salt**
1	teaspoon **black pepper**

1 Finely chop fresh ingredients and add to a mixing bowl. Add lemon juice and canola oil and mix thoroughly. The mixture should have the consistency of a pourable sauce. Add red pepper flakes, salt and black pepper.

2 Consolidate into a storage container and refrigerate for up to one week. Serve over a freshly sliced grilled steak of your choice.

VESTAL 555 JEFFERSON ST. • LAFAYETTE • 337-534-0682 • VESTALRESTAURANT.COM • @VESTALLAF

ILLUSTRATION BY S.E.GEORGE

LISA LEBLANC-BERRY
ROMERO & ROMERO

A Healthful Hibiscus Spritz

CINCLARE REOPENS WITH SEASONALLY-INSPIRED SOUTHERN CUISINE AND AN ENTICING ARRAY OF ZERO-PROOF DRINKS

WITH MORE CONSUMERS GRAVITATING towards healthier beverage options, Acadiana imbibers are seeking mocktails and low-ABV cocktails that don't compromise on flavor. Inspired mixologists such as Jeffery Markel lead the way in zero-proof concoctions.

As beverage director and general manager of Cinclare Bar & Table in Thibodaux, Markel's sophisticated zero-proof drinks are enticing sober-curious guests to enjoy the social aspect of drinking without the buzz.

"Our refreshing zero-proof Hibiscus Spritz is one of my favorites," he says. "Many of our guests repeatedly ask for this drink. You can make the ingredients ahead of time and keep them in the refrigerator to grab for a quick single serving or make a round of them to share with your friends."

Opened as Cinclare Southern Bistro in 2016, the modernized Cinclare Bar & Table's new seasonal menus emphasize Chef Logan Boudreaux's creative Southern cuisine and Markel's original cocktails and enticing mocktails.

"The new name goes with our updated look," Markel adds. "We built a new kitchen, put sound paneling on the walls, changed the lighting, bought new furniture, and I personally refinished all the tables. It's more romantic, cozier and very high end." ■

The combination of the hibiscus, orange and lemon makes this a light, bright drink that will keep you from noticing that the alcohol isn't there

RECIPE

ADD ICE TO A LARGE WINE GLASS, POUR IN 4 OZ. ICE COLD CLUB SODA AND TOP WITH 2 OZ. TRIPLE-STRENGTH HIBISCUS ORANGE TEA, ¼ OZ. FRESH LEMON JUICE AND ½ OZ. HONEY SYRUP. STIR GENTLY TO COMBINE WITHOUT BREAKING THE BUBBLES. TWIST A LARGE PIECE OF ORANGE ZEST OVER THE DRINK, DROP INTO THE GLASS AND GARNISH WITH A SPRIG OF MINT.

CINCLARE BAR & TABLE 601 W. 3RD ST. • THIBODAUX • CINCLAREFOODANDDRINK.COM • f @CINCLARE • @CINCLARE_RESTAURANT

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OLD WORLD PASTRIES AND MORE FROM **THE BEKERY**

NESTLED WITHIN WALNUT GROVE in Lake Charles is The Bekery, a unique bakery that offers nuanced and deftly prepared pastries, sandwiches and coffee. ¶ The aroma of baked goods with European culinary influences will greet you when you enter the eatery. The Bekery owner Rebekah Hoffpauir planned it that way.

THE BEKERY
2040 E. WALNUT ST.
LAKE CHARLES
@THEBEKERYLLC
337-761-4777

She opened the Lake City business in 2016. Today, it is a spot where high school and college students, wives and husbands, business owners and the who's-who gather.

Foodies who are drawn to croissants have a nice list of offerings: butter croissants, chocolate croissants, kouign amanns, bear claws, almond croissants, chocolate almond croissants and ham and cheese, to name a few.

The pastry list includes buttermilk biscuits, blueberry biscuits, lemon scones, cinnamon rolls, pecan sticky buns, salted pretzels, cinnamon pretzels and bacon cheddar scones.

A passion for baking is what led Hoffpauir to open the business. She hired Chef Octavio Ycaza in 2024. The 46-year-old Ecuadorian and Paris-trained kitchen wizard is excited about The Bekery's future.

"This is a cool culinary platform that I stepped into too. It has a captive audience," Ycaza said. "We bring the best of technique and flavor."

Aside from croissants and pastries, The Bekery's menu surprises with an

TRY THIS

1 SALMON TOAST

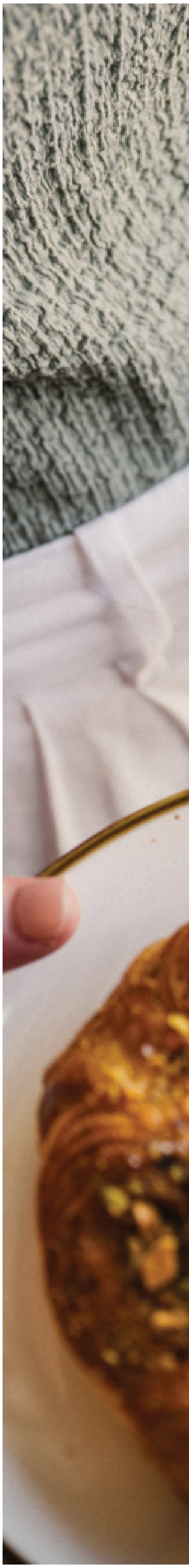
Flavor with a few bells and whistles ... herbed cream cheese, shaved shallots, caper berries, smoked salmon and microgreen salad on toasted sourdough.

2 GRILLED CHEESE

This sandwich fulfills the cheese urge of current children and those of us who sort of grew up. Provolone, Swiss, and white cheddar are melded with caramelized red onion and toasted on house-made focaccia.

3 CHICKEN COBB SALAD

Sometimes, all a person needs is a refreshing salad that hits the proverbial spot. This salad has it all: chicken, bacon crumble, egg, cheddar, tomatoes, avocado and romaine spring mix.



adventurous selection of sandwiches, quiche and coffee. Ycaza recommends the croque monsieur sandwich, which is honey ham, Swiss cheese, Creole aioli on garlic butter grilled brioche and topped with tomato and rosemary béchamel.

Two other customer favorites are the Cuban and the chicken salad croissant. The Cuban is mojo-marinated pulled pork, ham, Swiss cheese, mustard, mayo and pickles placed between two pieces of crispy ciabatta.

Chicken salad is a long-standing Bekery special. It is made with chicken, pecans, grapes, celery and onion.

Coffee lovers are offered coffee roasted specifically for The Bekery. “A guy in Sulphur — who used to work at a local coffee shop — takes care of us. Our coffee is a special blend that can be found only at The Bekery,” Ycaza said.

Staff prepare cafe au lait, espresso, Americano, French press, cortado, cappuccino, and lattes to order. When the seasons change, The Bekery staff showcases coffee specials also.

Bread lovers will be pleased to know they can purchase different house-made loaves of bread like baguette, seeded baguette, focaccia, country sourdough, ciabatta, and olive and rosemary ciabatta.

“We do cool stuff here,” Ycaza said. “We aren’t just a bakery. We aren’t just a pastry spot. We do coffee and meet the interests of many people in Lake Charles.” ■

COLBY LEJEUNE

SARA WILLIA

"Le Baignage de Forêt"

ÇA VA TE FAIRE DU BIEN

Y'A UN VIEUX DIT-ON DANS la Louisiane : "Février est pas bâtard." Si ça c'est juste un tit peu moins clair que de l'eau trouble, y'a une autre expression, joliment pareille, qui se dit dans la France : "L'hiver est pas bâtard ; s'il vient pas tôt, il vient tard," qui va peut-être éclaircir un tit brin la signification de ce proverbe : l'hiver, ça que c'est qu'il a passé les derniers quelques mois à faire, reste l'hiver, et le froid de ses dernières semaines peut être aussi mordant que cil-là de ses premières. Mais c'est la Louisiane ici, pas la France. Ici, les seuls frètes, c'est les ceusses qui suit les coups de nord, des masses d'air froid et sec qui ressourd de dans l'intérieur profond et glacé du continent ; et, après leur passage, on revient toujours aux jours de chaud léger et confortable ; et c'est ces périodes d'apaisement entre les coups de nord, ces journées de 'tites fraîches qui te pousse à la chaleur carabiné du soleil, qu'est l'occasion parfaite pour faire quelque chose qu'est rarement aussi invitant les autres parties de l'année : passer du temps dehors, dans le monde naturel — dans ça que les amoureux de la nature comme moi, on nomme "le vrai monde."

Dans le Japon, ils ont une coûtume que ç'appelle "shinrin yoku," traduit littéralement comme "du baignage de forêt," qui donne un nom à une idée bien simple : être dans le bois, ou dans la nature plus généralement, c'est bon pour toi — et t'as pas de besoin d'être bennêt pour la nature pour apprécier le bien qu'alle peut te faire : si t'es chasseur ou pêcheur, tu connais déjà la paix tranquille des moments assognés passés dans le bois ou dessus l'eau, loin du train de la ville et la vie de chaque jour. Ça fait, si vous avez envie — ou besoin — de s'échapper, je voudrais vous proposer un tit brin de baignage de forêt : promenez-vous-donc dans le bois, trouvez-vous une tite routine bien piloté — ou faisez-vous-z'en une pour vous-même — et marchez ; écoutez les ciriers, les jorées et les foufous, avant ça part pour le nord dégelant, et promenez-vous parmi les fleurs qui naît et vit leurs vies avant même les feuilles du grand bois fait les premiers ombrages jaunes du printemps — ou bien, descendez le bayou Têche, montez le bayou Fusillier, traversez le lac Martin en kayak, contez les cocodrils et les tortues et les chaouis, ou lâchez une ligne à pêche et voyez ça qui vient curieux après l'aboëte ; guettez le feu de l'éclaircie du jour prend dans les faîtes des cypres nus, quand la boucane inversée de ses barbes grises danse légèrement mais majusteusement dans le grouillement doux de l'air frigid matinal ; marchez au long de la plaïe, voyez si vous pouvez sentir les fleurs du Yucatan dessus le premier coup de sud de l'année. Profitez de l'occasion de déglacer vos os, avant tout les ceusses qu'est dans votres jambes, raides d'un hiver — ou d'une vie durante — de mal soin. Laissez à côté le monde de bâtisses et de boss pour un tit élan et passez-vous du temps dans le vrai monde — dépus, comme disait défunt Marion Marcotte, "c'est bon pour tous les maladies et tous les caprices quelqu'un peut avoir dans la vie." ■

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A quick trip to Coastal Mississippi is the perfect way to reconnect, rejuvenate and put "having fun" at the top of your to-do list. Casino entertainment, unique restaurants, art galleries and, of course, miles of beaches are right here waiting for you. Plan your adventure today at **VisitMississippi.org/CoastalGetaway.**

Biloxi Beach | Biloxi, Mississippi